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VANISHING WETLANDS: TWO VIEWS

NEW EXHIBIT TO OPEN AT U.S. BOTANIC GARDEN

January 11, 2007 - Washington, DC -- *Vanishing Wetlands: Two Views* is a new exhibit opening at the U.S. Botanic Garden on January 20, 2007. Organized by the LSU Museum of Art, the traveling exhibit showcases Louisiana's coastal parishes through paintings, photographs, and multi-media components. The exhibit is on display in the West Orangerie of the USBG Conservatory through May 13.

Vanishing Wetlands: Two Views illustrates the passion that two Baton Rouge artists share for the restoration of Louisiana's eroding coast and their desire to heighten public awareness of this environmental loss. Included are wildlife and wetlands **photographs by C.C. Lockwood**, a naturalist who has recorded the life of the rivers, bayous, and marshes of southern Louisiana for almost thirty years. Complementing Lockwood's photographs are the dramatic and colorful **oil paintings by Rhea Gary**, his artistic collaborator. Together, they have documented the wetlands and its inhabitants to bring attention to a significant yet rapidly vanishing ecological and economic zone. This project also is the subject of a book, *Marsh Mission: Capturing the Vanishing Wetlands* (Louisiana State University Press, 2005).

Lockwood's photographs and Gary's paintings about the wetlands issue are timely: they are part of a larger state and national effort to bring attention to the phenomenon of coastal erosion, restoration, and management. The ***Vanishing Wetlands: Two Views*** exhibit exposes the scientific, social, and political impacts of coastal erosion and brings to light a glaring paradox -- what we see and understand to be a "picturesque" view of the wetlands region is greatly at odds with the vast coastal deterioration that is now occurring.

In conjunction with the exhibit, the **artists will present lectures** about vanishing wetlands and the Marsh Mission project. Both programs are free, but pre-registration is requested (call 202-226-4082 or visit www.usbg.gov):

Wednesday, January 24, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Rhea Gary will discuss why wetlands loss is occurring and why it is essential to address marshland restoration now.

Thursday, January 25, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

C.C. Lockwood will speak about his experiences creating the ***Vanishing Wetlands*** exhibit.

The U.S. Botanic Garden Conservatory and the adjacent National Garden are open to the public, free of charge, every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Conservatory is located at 100 Maryland Avenue SW, on the west side of the U.S. Capitol. Visitors are encouraged to take Metrobus and Metrorail. Further information is available by calling 202-225-8333 or visiting www.usbg.gov.